THE OAKLEAF NEWSLETTER

Navy Nurse Corps

Courage • Legacy • Care

April 2026

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR
Cmdr. Kara McDowell

NEWSLETTER STAFF
Lt. Cmdr. Joy Michelle Dizon
Lt. Cmdr. Beverly Howell
Lt. Adeline Villanueva
Lt. Cmdr. Diana Hemstreet (RC)
Lt. Brook Barges (RC)

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This issue introduces revised rank abbreviations (e.g., "LCDR" to "Lt. Cmdr.") to meet PAO requirements for external distribution. This formatting will remain standard in future editions. Many of the articles featured in this issue also serve as a recap of select events and accomplishments from 2025.

EMAIL US!

NC CHIEF REMARKS

Robert Hawkins
Rear. Adm., NC, USN
Chief
Navy Nurse Corps

Greetings,

First and foremost, thank you for your unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional clinical care. Your professionalism remains the bedrock of our mission and ensures we provide world-class healthcare to our beneficiaries. As we navigate a rapidly evolving healthcare environment and increasing global demands, I want to continue to align our focus with the Navy Surgeon General's four Lines of Effort: EXMEDS, Deployability, Quality Healthcare, Recruitment & Retention.

Operational **Readiness** must always be our foremost priority. We are entrusted with missions that can arise anywhere in the world, often without notice. Sustaining readiness demands continuous learning, realistic and relevant training, and integration of evidence-based practices and emerging technologies that enhance our clinical and operational capabilities. A ready medical force and a medically ready force is central to Navy Medicine's purpose.

Our strength begins with our people, and your well-being is essential to deployability, yielding mission success. **Resilience**—mental, emotional, and physical—is what enables us to execute in high-stress and high-stakes environments. I encourage you to seek support when needed and to invest in your own growth. Likewise, leadership at every level is critical: mentoring others, pursuing development opportunities, and contributing to the culture of excellence that defines the Navy Nurse Corps.

Finally, **Recruitment** is essential to sustaining the future of the Navy Nurse Corps. Our community thrives when we attract talented, dedicated individuals who embody our core values of honor, courage, and commitment. I challenge each of you to share your story, engage prospective candidates, and inspire others to join our ranks. Your passion and professionalism are our greatest recruiting tools.

Together, by aligning our efforts with the Surgeon General's Lines of Effort, we will continue to deliver exceptional care to our Sailors, Marines, their families, and all who depend on us. Thank you for the extraordinary work you do and for the profound impact you make each day.

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NC RESERVE DEPUTY CHIEF INTRODUCTION

Kimberly M. Sandberg
Rear. Adm., NC, USN
Deputy Chief
Navy Nurse Corps Reserve

Navy Nurses,

I'm deeply honored to represent the best corps in the Navy. Since 1908, Navy nurses have served our nation's warfighters with dedication and excellence. Today, you continue that tradition by providing world-class care to our warfighters, their families, and retirees. Your leadership, mentorship, and commitment to duty are unmatched.

Our Mission: Ready on Day One

As Chief of the Reserve Nurse Corps, my job is straightforward—ensure our reserve nurses are trained, equipped, and ready to support warfighter readiness from day one. This means being both operationally and professionally prepared. Here's how we make that happen:

- Training that matters - We deliver programs through online, virtual, and hands-on events that are accessible, relevant, and valuable to you and your mission.
- Mobilization readiness - We support readiness at local Navy Reserve Centers and expeditionary medical platforms, keeping our teams sharp and prepared.
- Professional development - We provide access to training courses and development opportunities that build high-performing nursing teams.
- Living our values - Everything we do is grounded in our Navy core values: Honor, Courage, and Commitment.

Taking Care of Each Other

Beyond operational readiness, we need to support one another. That starts with effective communication up and down the chain of command. Stay proactive—whether by phone, email, or text. My expectation is simple: take every opportunity to advance yourself using available resources like training and mentors. My hope is that you find your drilling environment challenging, engaging, and rewarding. I'm committed to supporting, mentoring, and continually challenging each of you to be as prepared as possible—both for your personal goals and our collective mission.

My Leadership Commitment to You

- Ensure our nurses have what they need to accomplish the Navy Reserve mission
- Balance leading with serving
- Mentor and support our future nursing leaders
- Build cohesive teams that leverage everyone's strengths
- Remove barriers and drive innovation

Professionalism Always

We do it right, and we do it well. We never sacrifice honesty and integrity. We're stronger because we bring different perspectives to difficult problems, but we share a unity of purpose and an unwavering commitment to our nation. We will continue developing high-performing teams that stimulate innovation and adapt to the ever-changing demands of our profession.

We've proven our resilience and agility time and again. Whether at the bedside or deployed on expeditionary medical platforms, we align with national defense priorities and get the mission done. I'm honored to serve alongside such dedicated nursing professionals.

Thank you for your service to our country.

NC DEPUTY CHIEF INTRODUCTION

Tracey Giles
Capt., NC, USN
Deputy Chief
Navy Nurse Corps

Some of My Favorite Things:

***Favorite Music Group*:**
New Edition

***Favorite Food*:**
Homemade Mac & Cheese

Favorite Activities:
Traveling, reading, spending time with family

Favorite Candy:
Pastel M&Ms

It's truly a pleasure to serve as your 27th Deputy Chief of the Navy Nurse Corps. When I reflect on the history of this role—beginning with **Capt. Ruth Houghton**, our very first Navy Nurse Corps Deputy Director (from 1947-1949) I'm both humbled and inspired by the opportunity to help advance our Navy Nurse Corps forward.

In this position, my top priority is to ensure every Navy Nurse across every military stage and setting is supported, developed, and empowered to operate in clinical excellence while caring for a dynamic warfighting force. Day to day, that means working closely with the Chief of the Navy Nurse Corps to strengthen the strategic communication, administrative processes, talent management pathways, and policy oversight that shape the experiences of more than 2,600 Navy Nurses worldwide. It also means consistent and focused collaboration with BUPERS, our Detailers, and Deputy Corps Chiefs across all Corps, to align leadership, key assignments, and billets in a way that positions our nurses and our mission for success.

I am alsooud to serve as a strategic leader for the Navy Nurse Corps, building strong relationships with our tri-service and community partners to ensure we're cohesively supporting warfighter readiness. My role is all about synchronizing the efforts that keep our NC and the Navy Medicine enterprise strong. We have an extraordinary team, and I'm energized every day by the work we do together to advance our operational capabilities, to strengthen our Navy Nurse Corps, and most importantly, to shape and support YOU and the future generation of Navy Nurses!

My Purpose: Service, Leadership, Impact!

Uniform Services University NC Faculty and Student Event

NAVAL MEDICAL LEADER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMAND (NMLPDC): WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU!

Submitted by Cmdr. Shannon W. Griffiths

NMLPDC is located in the historic tower at NSA Bethesda. While the command is home to several directorates, the one of main interest to the Nurse Corps is the Officer Programs Directorate (OPD). OPD provides oversight of the Navy Medicine Graduate Medical Education (GME) and Graduate Professional Education (GPE) programs: manages commissioning programs for Navy and Marine Corps enlisted personnel, administers and manages continuing education (CE) approval for Navy Medicine, provides Non-Budget Submitting Office (Non-BSO) 18 training support, and board certification and maintenance.

Duty under instruction (DUINS) is one of the amazing benefits available to commissioned Nurse Corps officers. This program allows commissioned officers the opportunity to attend Graduate school programs (Military and Civilian) while on full-time active duty. Essentially, the Navy pays you to go to school and picks up the cost for tuition! Members submit completed packages to a review board consisting of senior officers where the packages are ranked and competitively selected for participation in the program. Of note, the most recent DUINS board included 75 training opportunities—this year we are expecting more, so now is the time to take advantage of this incredible opportunity to further your education! Anticipate the AY DUINS note to be published in May 26.

Additionally, NMLPDC has funding to support board certification and maintenance. This facilitates board certification and the advancement of our nursing force while compensating for the financial burden of board-required fees.

Finally, OPD contains the Accredited Approver Program for Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Continuing Nursing Education (CNE). The national professional association of RNs, the American Nurses Association (ANA), emphasizes the importance of professional development and lifelong learning. The Accredited Approver Program offers educational activities that enhance professional practice, enhance patient care, and the health of our beneficiaries. These activities also facilitate continuing education credits for certification and licensure maintenance. For FY25, OPD approved 568 activity applications, offering 13,120 credits/contact hours, with 12,127 registered participants.

DUINS & Board Certification POC:

Cmdr. Dana Dones, MM, MA Ed, NC, USN
Dean/Head, Nurse Corps Graduate Programs
Office: 301-295-1822
Email: dana.dones.mil@health.mil

***For reimbursement of board expenses, email packages to Navy Medicine Leader & Development Command (NML&PDC):**
usn.bethesda.navmedleadprodevcmd.mbx.nmlpdc-cme-funding@health.mil

CME/CNE POCs:

Cmdr. Angela Healy, NC, USN
Accredited Approver Program Director
Navy CME/CNE Program Manager
Office: 301-319-4742
Email: angela.r.healy.mil@health.mil

Cmdr. Shannon W. Griffiths, MSN, APRN, ACCNS-P, NC, USN
Navy CME/CNE Program Manager
Office: 301-319-4511
Email: shannon.w.griffiths.mil@health.mil

Left to right first row CAPT James Corbett (Commanding Officer) Second row: CDR Dana Dones, CAPT Jayson Huber, CDR Katiana Cruet, LCDR Matthew Turner, CAPT Protegenie Reed (Executive Officer) LT Ashley Barker, CDR Alaina Downey, CDR Jessica Dillon, LT Cheryl Anne Kivlehan, CDR Kamisha Francis, LT Leanne Landry Last Row: LCDR Norma Quichiz, CDR Jason Switzer, CAPT Istvan Hargitai, CDR Preston Criddle, LCDR Ato Anderson, CDR Brittany Turner, LCDR Syed Husain, LT Dillon Sather, LCDR Jin Hwang, LCDR Nathan Kobold /Released

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TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

Course Name	Start Date	End Date	Location	Registration
Fundamentals of Global Heath Engagement (GHE 201)	Apr 20, 2026	Apr 24, 2026	Virtual	Website
Senior Leadership Course (SLC)	Apr 20, 2026	Apr 24, 2026	Virtual	CeTARS/eNTRS
Senior Leader Legal Course (SLLC)	Apr 21, 2026	Apr 23, 2026	Newport, RI	CeTARS/eNTRS
Capstone for MHS Leaders	Jul 13, 2026	Jul 16, 2026	Virtual	Nomination through Corps Chief's Office
Commander Amphibious Task Force Surgeon Course (CATF0-S)	Sep 21, 2026	Oct 2, 2026	San Diego, CA	CeTARS/eNTRS

SHARPEN YOUR SKILLS WITH TROPICAL MEDICINE TRAINING!

Submitted by Lt. Mercedes Proctor

MTM India: Cmdr. Ifeanyi Izuakor, Naval Reserve Command Greensboro/ NMRTC Portsmouth/ Released

MTM Liberia: Cmdr. Christina Carter, NMRTC 29 Palms & Lt. Jonathan Rivera, NMRTC Camp Lejeune/Released

The Navy Medicine Leadership & Professional Development Command (NMLPDC) offers a unique, funded opportunity for nurses to specialize in tropical medicine. This skill set is operationally vital for preventing and recognizing diseases in deployed forces and for supporting humanitarian missions.

Mission Overview

Participants will embark on a 2-3 week Military Tropical Medicine Field Mission, providing exposure to tropical diseases and conditions not typically encountered in a standard military treatment facility (MTF). During the mission, nurses will:

- Engage with local subject matter experts in various medical specialties.
- Collaborate with the host country's health departments and community liaisons.
- Gain a new perspective on public health structures and practices.

Key Benefits

Official Record	The course is added as a service school to your Officer Record upon completion.
Continuing Education	Earn 100 CEUs that can be applied toward most RN licenses and some certification renewals.
Funding	In the past, this field mission has been centrally funded by NMLPDC.

For more information, I recommend speaking with nurses who have completed the mission to learn about their unique experiences. You can also visit the official Military Tropical Medicine page.

Who Should Apply?

While a strong interest in public or global health is helpful, nurses from all specialties are encouraged to apply. You do not need to be in an operational position to be considered.

NC OFFICER COMMUNITY MANAGER

Heather Ray
Capt., NC, USN
Officer Community Manager
Navy Nurse Corps

Release of the FY26 Lineal List triggered some questions, in particular the use of one abbreviation. "AZ NPC" has made rare appearances over the last few decades, but this year the abbreviation made quite a showing. The abbreviation stands for Above Zone Not Previously Considered (AZ NPC) and its occurrence on the list was due to an increased number of reservists recalling to active duty. When a reservist's request for permanent active duty is approved, they retain their reserve rank, date of rank, and selection status if selected (failures do not carry over). AZ NPC means a person has not been considered for promotion by an active duty promotion board, but has a date of rank/lineal number more senior to the In Zone population. AZ NPC may occur under other circumstances, such as a return to active duty from the Career Intermission Program. When members return to active duty for any reason, they must be on active duty for at least one year at the time the board convenes to be considered for promotion. All members are automatically deferred (not considered) unless they expressly request a waiver of deferment. Members listed as In Zone or Above Zone who have not served a full year on active duty at the time the board convenes are not considered for promotion unless they request the waiver of deferment. The waiver process and due dates for the request are detailed in the zone NAVADMIN. The NAVADMIN also contains board convening dates and due dates for Letters to the Board (LTB).

NAVADMIN 248/24

Washington, DC (March 2025): Capt. Melissa Burke's promotion ceremony was held at the Military Women's Memorial in Washington, DC. In a rare occurrence, five of eleven manpower nurses were together at the same time! (L to R) Lt. Cmdr. Christie Hoban, Capt. Melissa Burke, Capt. Heather Ray, Cmdr. Tatiana Crosby, and Lt. Cmdr. Andrew Veilleux/Released

CNO, NAVAL MEDICAL FORCES PACIFIC

Karen Belcar
Capt., NC, USN
Chief Nursing Officer
Naval Medical Forces Pacific

Greetings from Naval Medical Forces Pacific! I am the new regional NMFP and the Defense Health Network Pacific Rim Chief Nursing Officer. I want to thank my exceptional predecessors, **Capt. John Volk** (NMFP) and **Capt. Kelly Vega** (DHN-PAC RIM) who did a remarkable job in continuing to advance health care delivery and operational readiness across our area of responsibility. Thank you for making my transition smooth.

I am an Adult/Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist and was previously the Chief Nursing Officer/Director of Nursing Services at U.S. Navy Medicine Readiness Training and Command Sigonella. In my current dual role as the CNO for the region and the network, I have the honor and privilege of overseeing nursing operations across nine military treatment facilities and 10 commands throughout the western United States and Indo-Pacific Region. As the network CNO, I serve as the vital link between the military treatment facilities and the Defense Health Agency. I am also responsible for supporting chief nursing officers at NMFP'S Navy Medicine and Training Commands, which are co-located within the MTFs, and liaising with the U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery and the Office of the Navy Nurse Corps.

My top priority is to understand the current landscape of nursing operations across the network MTF's and the readiness and training requirements for the regional commands, and working with the nursing chief officers to evaluate organizational strengths and areas of improvement. My goal is to tackle complex health care challenges with strategic vision and create sustainable solutions. I am ready to lead the network's and region's nursing enterprise into the future - fostering excellence in patient care for the DHA while ensuring medical readiness of the Navy's nursing workforce.

San Diego, CA (December 2024): Nurses aboard USNS Mercy (T-AH 19)/Released

CNO IN THE SPOTLIGHT: NMRTC GREAT LAKES

Submitted by Cmdr. Jessie Gorman

Daniel McClure
Capt., NC, USN
Chief Nursing Officer
NMRTC Great Lakes

Having grown up in Maine, I was excited to experience all four seasons when I arrived at NMRTC Great Lakes at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center in North Chicago. Learning how to scrape ice off my windshield and stand in formation during a blizzard provides some of the best resiliency-building exercises imaginable. While the command is widely recognized for providing care to recruits in boot camp at the Quarterdeck of the Navy, its strategic partnership as the nation's only fully integrated joint VA and DOD healthcare facility and its operational readiness missions are equally impressive at this historic institution.

As Chief Nursing Officer, I have the privilege of leading approximately 40 Nurse Corps officers who support multiple readiness and healthcare delivery missions. In addition to this role, I serve as the Deputy Associate Director for Patient Care Services within the facility's VA partnership, overseeing nursing, sterile processing, and chaplain services.

Our Expeditionary Resuscitative Surgical System (ERSS) teams operate at a high tempo at the prestigious Level 1 Trauma Center, John H. Stroger Hospital in Cook County, downtown Chicago. This rapidly deployable team provides immediate forward resuscitative surgery, prolonged field care, and en-route critical care, comprising of a surgeon, an anesthesia provider, an emergency room provider, two nurses, and two corpsmen. With the successful deployment and return of our first team, we look forward to continued achievements in deployment, training, sustainment, and collaboration with the Cook County staff.

At the nation's only Navy boot camp, our recruiting teams have exceeded their goals over the past year, bringing in an impressive number of recruits to prepare for the fleet. The medical team has risen to the challenge, with nurses spearheading policies to improve patient throughput, delivering safe and effective care, making critical catches in medically complex cases, and contributing to the recruits' remarkable 92% graduation rate.

In March 2024, the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center implemented the Federal Electronic Health Record (FEHR). This initiative integrated components that had long been challenging to synchronize within the joint facility, making this EHR rollout the capstone for MHS GENESIS across the DOD and the sixth VA facility to adopt Oracle Health. Having been stationed at two prior commands during EHR launches, I had the honor of co-chairing the Informatics Steering Committee, helping to coordinate over 700 personnel who supported the rollout's success.

The beginning of 2024 also marked the launch of the Navy Nurse Residency Program at this command. For the first time, newly graduated and newly commissioned Navy nurses were assigned to the program, which **Lt. Cmdr. Maria Vitale-Echon** designed to align with the hospital's specialties, branch clinics, and partnerships with Cook County Hospital. **Lt. Cmdr. Brandi Wilson** has taken over the reins as her predecessor transferred, ensuring the successful graduation from the program of five nurses. We are excited about the next cohort's potential, bolstered by strong Nurse Corps recruiting efforts. Two residency graduates, **Ens. Alexandria Demeny** and **Ens. Keala Hallerberg**, were selected to attend the Pathway to Excellence conference in October as DOD representatives on the integrated VA/DOD team dedicated to achieving Pathway to Excellence designation. This ANCC program recognizes healthcare organizations that create positive practice environments that empower and engage staff.

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CNO IN THE SPOTLIGHT: NMRTC GREAT LAKES

We deeply value our partnership with Advocate Condell Medical Center, where **Lt. Conor Ford** earned his 1960 subspecialty code after gaining critical care experience and passing his certification exam last winter. Other nurses with this subspecialty code, as well as those pursuing it, benefit greatly from this unique and enriching experience.

The past 18 months have been incredibly rewarding. The Nurse Corps officers at this command continuously strive for excellence, meet challenges across diverse mission sets, and overcome barriers with professionalism and determination. As the Military Health System's landscape evolves, I am eager to face future opportunities and challenges with this extraordinary and dynamic team.

Great Lakes, IL (May 2025): NMRTC Nurses pose in front of Joint Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center/NMRTC Great Lakes (USS Tranquility) during Nurses Week 2025. (Pictured L to R) Eva Grimaldo, Dr. Lewis, Greta Abraham, Capt. McClure, Lt. Cmdr. Steele, Alexander Callejo, Lt. Hart, Steven Baker, Lt. Cmdr. Vitale-Echon, Terri Collins, Elizabeth Brignall-Youskectch, Cmdr. Gorman, Dr. April Shaw, Lt. Wheeler, Cmdr. Tabor. Photo by Hospital Corspman Senior Chief Neuroth/Released

Great Lakes, IL (May 2025): (Photo to Right) Joint Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center/NMRTC Great Lakes celebrated Nurses week with the integrated Lovell FHCC nurses, civilian and military RNs, LPNs, CNAs, nurse practitioners, and nurse educators. Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Ferrugi/Released

(May 2024): U.S. Navy ERSS Deployment Team One is welcomed back from deployment at Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD). (Pictured L to R): Cmdr. Adrian Korduba, Cmdr. Brigham Douglas, Lt. Cmdr. Aimee Grande, Lt. Jeffrey Henderson, Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class William Wahl, Lt. Caroline Kivisto, Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Kyle Imperato/Released

Great Lakes, IL (May 2025): FHCC Executive Leadership and Change Management Team. (Picture L to R) Dr. Robert Buckley, Chief Health Informatics Officer Dr. Norman Lee, Dr. Jeffrey Oken, Bonnie Hipolito, Cmdr. Jessie Gorman, Dr. April Shaw, Command Master Chief Christopher Swinney, Cmdr. Loretta Stein, Capt. Daniel McClure, Kathleen Kennedy, Monyca Fisher, and Capt. Chad McKenzie. Photo by T. Seela/ Released

SPECIALTY LEADER UPDATE

PEDIATRIC NURSING (1922) / NURSE PRACTITIONER (1974)

Submitted by Cmdr. Konstance Mackie

Konstance Mackie
Cmdr., NC, USN
Specialty Leader
1922/1974

Dehussa Urbieta
Lt. Cmdr., NC, USN
Assistant Specialty Leader
1922/1974

Similar to our often tiny patients, the Navy Pediatric Nursing (1922) and Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (1974) communities are small; however, these highly skilled, hard-charging nurse leaders continue caring for patients and leading cutting-edge military healthcare teams around the globe. As a community, we stand **READY** to use our unique expertise to care for patients and families wherever and whenever called upon. Most recently, we welcomed home several pediatric nurses who deployed on the USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) in support of Pacific Partnership 2024, including **Lt. Cmdr. Jasette Fong**, as the Pediatric Department Head and **Lt. J.G. Nikko Cabrera**, as a newly Board-Certified Pediatric Nurse. Congratulations! In this ever-changing military healthcare environment, we remain **RELEVANT**, contributing directly to military family readiness, allowing warfighters to remain focused on the mission, knowing that their children are in highly qualified hands. Nursing leaders such as **Cmdr. Amy Clark**, Director for Public Health at NMRTC Camp Lejeune, and **Lt. Cmdr. Alexandra Gracia**, Naval Medical Forces Atlantic Chief Nurse Informatics Officer, continue to use their highly sought after knowledge and experience to influence healthcare policy. We are **RESILIENT** and growing! Our community is thrilled to bring **Lt. Cmdr. Joanne Bien-Aime,** PNP from the Naval Reserves to Active-Duty and enthusiastically support **Lt. Cmdr. Deborah Steele**, a future PNP currently in DUINS. Our community is proud to support various pediatric military healthcare missions because investing in children directly influences the future of our force.

These current FNPs are serving in senior leadership roles:
Capt. Tamberlynn Baker, Commanding Officer
Capt. Elizabeth Bundt, Commanding Officer
Capt. Maria Morenochow, Executive Officer
Capt. Michael Lattrell, Executive Officer
Capt. Kathryn Stewart, Executive Officer
Capt. Lisa Gittleman, Deputy Chief of Staff

Trailblazing Pediatric Nurse Leaders:
Capt. Brooke Basford, Chief Nursing Officer, USNS Mercy
Capt. Tim Brender, Director for Healthcare Services, NMRTC Pearl Harbor
Cmdr. Kimberly Hendricks, Officer in Charge, Naval Air Technical Training Center Branch Health Clinic, NMRTC Pensacola, Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist
Lt. Cmdr. Jasette Fong, Assistant Department Head, Inpatient Multiservice Ward/Maternal Infant Nursing Department, NMRTC Twentynine Palms, Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist

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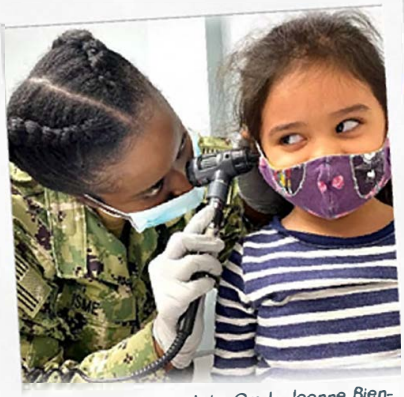
1922/1974 COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS



Kings Boy, GA (2021): Lt. Cmdr. Joonne Bien-Aime performs a well-child check. Photo by D. Smith/ Released

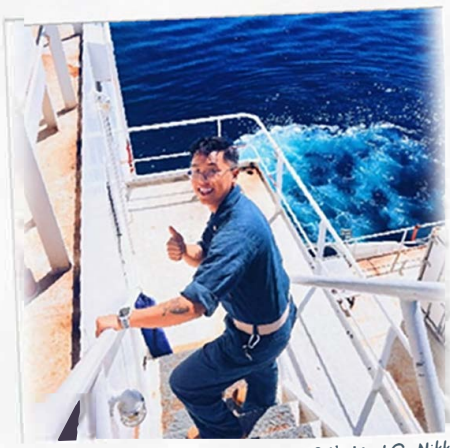
Lt. Cmdr. Joanne Bien-Aime, DNP, CPNP-PC

*"**As a Nurse Corps Naval Officer**, I am honored to have the opportunity to serve nation's greatest pediatric patients and their military families. I chose pediatrics because in pediatrics I have found my calling. I support patient care through health promotion, wellness, and education. In their time of uncertainty, I am privileged to provide a caring hand."*

USS Lewis B Puller (ESB-3) (May 2024): Lt. Cmdr. Steele displays her school's flag. Photo by Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class A. Hughes/ Released

Lt. Cmdr. Deborah Steele, MSN, RN
DUINS Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Student

*"**As an emergency nurse**, it was a privilege to help children, and their families get back to feeling like themselves in the acute setting. I realized I wanted to see children and their families grow and develop over the lifespan and I am looking forward to that as a PNP. Supporting military families across the world and assisting in establishing healthy habits is the greatest honor I can imagine!"*



USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) (January 2024): Lt. J.G. Nikko Cabrero gives a "thumbs up" while underway to Hawaii, US where he served as Charge/Staff Nurse on the Pediatric Unit, Ward 9, during Pacific Partnership 2024. Photo by Lt. M. Sorrells/ Released

Lt. J.G. Nikko Antonio Cabrera, RN, CPN
NMRTC San Diego

*"**As a pediatric nurse**, I have the privilege of providing care to children during some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives. Seeing them bounce back from illness together with parents, guardians, or caretakers while being a source of comfort and reassurance makes me feel like I've made a significant difference, and honestly, kids say the darndest things which brings a good laugh. I feel like I'm a child at heart and that makes it that much easier to take care of kids who probably have the same interests I do."*

FROM THE FLEET: THREE DAY CRASH COURSE—PREPARING A FUTURE NAVY PSYCHIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONER

Submitted by Lt. Cmdr. David Frey

David Frey
Lt. Cmdr., NC, USN
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)
NBHC Iwakuni, Japan

When **Lt. Cristian Barnutz,** a Multi-Service Unit nurse stationed in Naples, Italy, reached out asking if he could shadow me for three days to prepare for his DUINS (Duty Under Instruction) application, I thought he was just exploring ideas. Then his itinerary hit my inbox—he was flying halfway across the world to spend 72 hours in my clinic. No pressure. He arrived, motivated and ready. We kicked off with introductions to the team—psychologists, social worker, and behavioral health techs, before diving into clinical cases. He observed **Lt. Cmdr. David Frey's** new psychiatric evaluations, follow-ups, and a range of diagnoses from ADHD and anxiety to bipolar spectrum disorders. We also tackled limited duty, medical boards, and fitness for duty—highlighting how Navy PMHNPs balance patient care with mission readiness.

Day two was again all clinical, packed with more complex cases and deep dives into treatment strategies. But it wasn't just about patients—it was about the leadership role PMHNPs play, managing care within the operational framework. Day three expanded his view beyond the clinic. We attended a stakeholder meeting with Marine Corps Community Services, covering behavioral health programs and community concerns. He then joined a focused leadership meeting with the Installation Director of Psychological Health, the MAG—embedded psychiatrist, and the head of Behavioral Health at MCCS—seeing firsthand how we collaborate to support the force. He even caught a visit from **Vice Admiral Cheever** (Air Boss), witnessing high-level discussions on supporting warfighters in INDOPACOM. Preparing him for DUINS in just three days was no small task, but it underscored a truth we all know: In Navy Medicine, it's not about the time you have—it's about how you use it. Good luck, Cristian. See you in the fleet.

Iwankuni, Japan (Feb 2025): Lt. Cmdr. Frey explains to Lt. Barnutz both the importance and impermanence of the DSM-5 (our diagnostic manual). Photo by Hospital Corspman Bryson Cushing /Released

(February 2025): (Photo to Left) Lt. Casie Jameson, MSC, Clinical Psychologist explains the principles of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to Lt. Cristian Barnutz. (Photo Middle): Lt. Cmdr. Frey explains the logistics of admitting, via AEROVAC, psychiatric patients in Japan to Lt. Barnutz. (Photo to Right): Lt. Barnutz meets Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Lt. Frederick Joshua, MSC. Photos by Hospital Corspman Bryson Cushing/ Released

Lt. Barnutz on his shadowing experience:
*"During my foray to Iwakuni, which houses a beautiful new building, I had the experience of shadowing with **Lt. Cmdr. Frey** and the mental/behavioral health department. Not only gathering shadowing hours from a mental health nurse practitioner, but also through experiencing group therapy lead by **Lt. Jameson** (Clinical Psychologist). The wealth of experiences increased my understanding of psychiatry with the inclusion of responsibilities of leadership. On the last day of shadowing, I had the chance to sit in on a base-wide meeting and in attendance were all the different facets of mental/behavioral health. The therapists, the social workers, the chaplains and the list goes on with all in attendance numbering in the 30s. A joint effort to combat the mental health challenges of the OCONUS duty station. I had a chance to experience mental health not only from the Navy's perspective but that of the Marine Corps and civilian outlook; ultimately working together as one unit. Overseas commands face many challenges, yet the approach and communication demonstrated by Iwakuni was impressive."*

FROM THE FLEET: EMPOWERING ENLISTED SAILORS TO PURSUE COMMISSIONING PROGRAMS

Submitted by Lt. Cmdr. Kristine Narciso

At U.S. Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command (NMRTC) Guam, mentorship, professional development, and preparing our Sailors for future success are top priorities. Recently, the command hosted a "Nurse Corps Takeover" event as part of the February Sailor 360 program, aiming to provide enlisted Sailors interested in commissioning as Navy Nurse Corps (NC) officers with clear, comprehensive information about available pathways.

NMRTC Guam (March 2025): Lt. Cmdr. Kristine Narciso kicks off the inaugural "Nurse Corps Sailor 360 Takeover" event. Photo by Capt. Patricia Butler /Released

The successful event drew 70 participants from four commands across Joint Region Marianas. A detailed PowerPoint presentation outlined every enlisted-to-commissioned Nurse Corps program, including Medical Enlisted Commissioning Program (MECP), Seaman-To-Admiral-21 (STA-21), Nurse Candidate Program (NCP), and direct commissioning. Attendees received key resources, NAVADMIN guidance, points of contact, and critical deadlines to help them navigate their career options confidently. To provide additional support, the command career counselor was also present to address administrative and program-specific questions.

To enhance the learning experience, a panel of 15 prior enlisted Sailors who had commissioned as Nurse Corps officers (also referred to as Mustangs) through different pathways shared their personal journeys, lessons learned, and current roles in Navy Medicine. Following the presentations, an interactive question and answer session allowed Sailors to engage directly with the panel and gain valuable mentorship and insight. The event was well received, with **Master Chief Matthew Fetterolf** describing it as "informational and inspirational", reinforcing the importance of exposing corpsmen to the many career advancement opportunities available. This Sailor 360 initiative reflects U. S. NMRTC Guam's commitment to developing future Navy Nurses, ensuring our enlisted personnel are well-informed, supported, and prepared for success. By integrating mentorship, education, and career development, we continue to strengthen the future of Navy Medicine—one Sailor at a time.

Lt. Abigail Doromal shares her enlisted-to-officer journey through the Medical Enlisted Commissioning Program (MECP). Photos by Capt. Patricia Butler/Released

Lt. Raul Cardona shares his Seaman-to-Admiral-21 (STA-21) program journey/Released

"Mustangs" at U.S. NMRTC Guam sponsored the inaugural "Nurse Corps Sailor 360 Takeover" event hosting 70 participants/Released

FROM THE FLEET: DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY FORENSIC HEALTHCARE LEAD VISITS NMRTC GUAM

Submitted by Cmdr. Mary King and Lt. Cmdr. Heather Nelson

The Forensic Healthcare Program (FHP) at U.S. Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command (NMRTC) Guam kicked off 2025 by hosting the Defense Health Agency's (DHA) Defense Health Network Indo-Pacific (DHN-IP) Forensic Healthcare lead, **Allyson Cordoni,** for a week of simulations and training. The program's current manager, **Cmdr. Mary King,** coordinated a four-day visit in January that included an in-depth program overview with incoming program manager, **Lt. Cmdr. Heather Nelson**, as well as comprehensive sexual assault medical forensic exams (SAFEs), peer review feedback of DD Form 2911s, case reviews, and four lecture topics that yielded 37 continuing education units (CEUs).

In a remote OCONUS location with approximately 13-15 SAFEs annually, Ms. Cordoni bridged training gaps for forensic healthcare examiners (FHEs), enabling previously trained FHEs to renew their competency requirements and validate FHE competencies in accordance with DHA credentialing requirements. As DHA inspections expand to include sexual assault response components, Ms. Cordoni's visit provided invaluable insight towards ensuring patient care services and compliance with policy requirements.

Those interested in expanding deployment readiness and supporting the FHP mission globally, should consider joining the team. To become a FHEs/Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examiner (SAMFE) candidates must:

1. Be licensed as a physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, nurse midwife, certified registered nurse anesthetist, clinical nurse specialist, or registered nurse.
2. Complete entry level training by one of the following:
   a. SAMFE Course, located at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and demonstrated competency within six months or equivalent DHA training within the DoD, within the past year.
   b. Certified with the Commission for Forensic Nursing Certification or other national certification body (e.g., SANE-A®) and complete the SAMFE Course within 12 months of appointment.
   c. The FY16 BUMED Mobile Training Team and the USAMEDCOM Headquarters SAMFE Course
3. Maintain credentialing and competency annually as by:
   a. Completing four sexual assault continuing education units.
   b. Demonstrating clinical competence through retrospective medical record review, live proctoring, completion of four SAFEs (either simulated or actual) validated by a supervisor.

NMRTC Guam (January 2025): Hospital Corspman 2nd Class Jennefer Torres assists with a simulated sexual assault medical forensic exam (SAFE)/Released

NMRTC Guam (January 2025): (Pictured L to R) Lt. Cmdr. Kelsey Campbell, Hospital Corspman 3rd Class Karielys Figueroa Santiago, and Lt. Cmdr. Heather Nelson perform a simulated SAFE. Photos by A. Cordoni/Released

NMRTC Guam (January 2025): (Pictured L to R) Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Kimberly Martinez-Osorio, Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Ruth Williams, Lt. Cmdr. Heather Nelson, Cmdr. Mary King, and Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Karielys Figueroa-Santiago pose by simulated patient. Photo by Cmdr. M. King/Released

FROM THE FLEET: NMRTC GUAM NURSE SELECTED AS FIRST SHIP'S NURSE FOR USS SOMERSET

Story by Petty Officer 1st Class Lester Guico

Agana Heights, Guam (February 2026): Lt. Nakpane Nbohn, a medical-surgical nurse assigned to NMRTC Guam has been selected as the first-ever Ship's Nurse aboard the amphibious warfare ship USS Somerset (LPD 25)/Released

Lt. Nakpane Nbohn, a medical-surgical nurse assigned to U.S. Naval Medical Readiness and Training Command Guam and U.S. Naval Hospital Guam, has been selected to serve as the first-ever nurse aboard the amphibious warfare ship USS Somerset (LPD 25).

With 11 years of service as a Navy Nurse Corps officer, Lt. Nbohn will serve as the sole medical-surgical nurse aboard the San Diego-based vessel, establishing the foundation for the newly created billet and setting the standard for future nurses assigned to the platform.

"*This was a long-term goal,*" Nbohn said. "*When the opportunity aligned with my career aspirations, I seized it without hesitation.*"

Although this will be his first dedicated operational assignment, Nbohn gained shipboard experience during two deployments aboard USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) supporting Pacific Partnership missions. In Guam, he currently serves in a high-acuity environment where he has refined his clinical and leadership skills as a charge nurse and nurse officer of the day.

Certified as a medical-surgical registered nurse, Nbohn also holds credentials in hematology/oncology, advanced life support, pediatric advanced life support, trauma nursing core course, and health education.

As the inaugural ship's nurse, he anticipates defining the scope of practice for medical-surgical nurses aboard an amphibious warfare ship while strengthening medical readiness for Sailors and embarked Marines. "*Being selected is a tremendous honor,*" he said. "*I understand the responsibility that comes with being a pioneer, and I am committed to building a strong foundation for those who follow.*" His assignment reflects the Navy's expanding integration of nursing leadership into operational environments and underscores the growing role of nurses in supporting fleet readiness.

"*This selection demonstrates that excellence in medical-surgical nursing translates directly to operational readiness,*" stated **Cmdr. William Westbrook**, Director of Nursing at USNH Guam. "*Our medical-surgical nurses manage complexity, think critically, and lead in dynamic environments every day - skills that are essential in the operational setting. This milestone reinforces our commitment to developing agile, mission-ready nurses who are prepared to serve wherever the Navy calls.*"

For junior nurses seeking operational billets, Nbohn offers simple advice: "*Seek mentorship and prepare yourself. Success is achieved when preparation meets opportunity.*"

2025 RECAP

BRAVO ZULU TO OUR NEW CERTIFIED NURSES!

well done!

CERTIFIED CRITICAL CARE NURSES

Lt. Roslyn Ablian, 3rd Med Bn
Lt. John Churchill, 2nd Med Bn
Lt. Ashley Dyer, 2nd Med Bn
Lt. Marble Fonseca, NMRTC Camp Lejeune
Lt. Alexander Johnson, 1st Med Bn
Lt. Hyun Na, Fleet Surgical Team 8
Lt. Chenny Phillips, 2nd Med Bn
Lt. Brandon Sims, NMRTC Guam
Lt. Annmarie Vasquez, NMRTC Portsmouth
Lt. J.G. Shaylie Butler, NMRTC Camp Pendleton
Lt. J.G. Cecilia Cates, NMRTC San Diego
Lt. J.G. Dylan Daniels, NMRTC Guam
Lt. J.G. Kyle Gross, NMRTC Portsmouth
Lt. J.G. Keith Hartfiel, NMRTC Portsmouth
Lt. J.G. Derek Hellwig, NMRTC Camp Pendleton
Lt. J.G. Curtis Olson, NMRTC Okinawa
Lt. J.G. Sterna Smith, NMRTC Camp Pendleton
Ens. Milo Casallas, Exped Med Fac Bravo

CERTIFIED MEDICAL-SURGICAL REGISTERED NURSES

Lt. Cmdr. Tanjji White, 3rd Med Bn
Lt. Alyssa Douzos, NMC Lemoore
Lt. Shannon Grant, NMRTC Sigonella
Lt. Elizabeth Timmer, 2nd Med Bn
Lt. Daniel Yoo, NMRTC Camp Pendleton
Lt. J.G. Veronica Moss, NMRTC Camp Pendleton
Lt. J.G. Clarice Poblete, NMRTC Camp Pendleton
Lt. J.G. Gabriella Santesteban, NMRTC Camp Pendleton
Lt. J.G. Mathew Sheets, NMRTC Camp Pendleton
Lt. J.G. Justin Speight, NMRTC Portsmouth

CERTIFIED EMERGENCY NURSES

Lt. Kailee Baughman, NMRTC Guam
Lt. Angelica Bustamante, NMRTC Guam
Lt. Brandon Frayser, NMRTC Bethesda
Lt. Dylan James, NMRTC Camp Pendleton
Lt. John Kowalski, Exped Med Fac Kilo
Lt. Levi Sheckely, NMRTC Jacksonville
Lt. Hayley Stromberg, NMRTC Jacksonville
Lt. J.G. Matthew Belmonte, Exped Med Fac Kilo
Lt. J.G. Jacob Garza, 1st Med Bn
Lt. J.G. Madison Greenwood, NMRTC Portsmouth
Lt. J.G. Mark Gregg, NMRTC Jacksonville
Lt. J.G. Jocelyn Gross, NMRTC Jacksonville
Lt. J.G. Ashton Hartwell, NMRTC Jacksonville
Lt. J.G. Jennifer Loyd, NMRTC Guam
Lt. J.G. Bassma Mancilla, NMRTC San Diego
Lt. J.G. Ryan Marczynski, NMRTC Okinawa
Lt. J.G. Rebecca McCool, NMRTC Portsmouth
Lt. J.G. Michael Morrissey, NMRTC Camp Lejeune
Lt. J.G. Lionel Oliver, Expeditionary Medical Ship 1
Lt. J.G. Michael Peters, NMRTC Jacksonville
Lt. J.G. Tanya Puente, NMRTC Portsmouth
Lt. J.G. Richmond Roy, Exped Med Fac Kilo
Lt. J.G. Andrew Smith, NMRTC Jacksonville
Ens. Gabrielle Lacobie, NMRTC Camp Lejeune/EMU 4

CERTIFIED PERIOPERATIVE NURSES

Lt. Cmdr. Brenna Dodge, NMRTC San Diego
Lt. Cmdr. Linnea Leonard, NMRTC Camp Pendleton
Lt. Sarah Templeman de Dulanto, NMRTC Jacksonville
Lt. Dana Heckinger, NMRTC Bethesda
Lt. Angelina Lacombe, NMRTC Portsmouth
Lt. Sara Lebus, NMRTC Portsmouth
Lt. Michelle Miner, NMRTC Portsmouth
Lt. Adeline Villanueva, NMRTC Bethesda

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BRAVO ZULU TO OUR NEW CERTIFIED NURSES!

well done!

CERTIFIED WOUND CARE NURSE (WCC)
Cmdr. Courtney Powell, NMRTC Camp Lejeune
Cmdr. Crystal Saracini, NMRTC Guantanamo Bay

RECERTIFIED NEONATAL NURSE PRACTITIONER (NNP- BC) AND NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE NURSE (RNC-NIC)
Cmdr. Desirae Pierce, NMRTC Portsmouth

CERTIFIED PSYCHIATRIC-MENTAL HEALTH NURSE PRACTITIONER (PMHNP-BC)
Cmdr. Eric Foster, 2nd Mar Div

CERTIFIED NATIONAL BOARD OF CERTIFICATION FOR NURSE ANESTHETISTS (NBCRNA)
Lt. Cmdr. Brian Dunford, NMRTC Camp Lejeune
Lt. Nicole Belle, NMRTC San Diego

CERTIFIED ADULT-GERONTOLOGY CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST (CNS)
Lt. Cmdr. Priscilla Boateng, NMRTC Camp Lejeune
Lt. Cmdr. Kristine Narciso, NMRTC Guam

CERTIFIED ACUTE CARE CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST, ADULT GERONTOLOGY (ACCNS-AG)
Lt. Cmdr. Wade Miller, NMRTC Bethesda

CERTIFIED AMBULATORY CARE NURSING (AMB-BC)
Lt. Terra Colangeli, NMRTC Lemoore
Lt. Jessica Riggins, NMRTC Camp Pendleton

CERTIFIED IN PUBLIC HEALTH (CPH)
Cmdr. Beverly Torres, NMRTU Bahrain
Lt. Tess Bandy, NMRTC Camp Lejeune
Lt. Andrew Mattocks, NMRTC Camp Lejeune

CERTIFIED PSYCHIATRIC-MENTAL HEALTH NURSING (PMH-BC)
Lt. Theresa Osborne, Exped Med Fac Kilo
Lt. J.G. Gerald Joyce, NMRTC San Diego
Lt. J.G. Drew Murray, NMRTC Guam

CERTIFIED FLIGHT REGISTERED NURSE (CFRN)
Lt. Melissa Anderson, 1st Med Bn
Lt. Kyle Rowland, Exped Med Fac Kilo

CERTIFIED INPATIENT OBSTETRIC NURSE (RNC-OB)
Lt. Gillian Gutierres, NMRTC Bethesda

CERTIFIED MATERNAL NEWBORN NURSE (RMNC-MNN)
Lt. George Kurn Theron, NMRTU Bahrain

CERTIFIED PEDIATRIC NURSE (CPN)
Lt. J.G. Stephen Healy, NMRTC Sigonella

CERTIFIED PEDIATRIC HEMATOLOGY ONCOLOGY NURSE (CPHON)
Lt. Dylan Maxwell, NMRTC Portsmouth
Lt. Kristen Rice, NMRTC Portsmouth
Lt. J.G. Emma Lovejoy, NMRTC Portsmouth
Ens. Andrew Betz, NMRTC Portsmouth
Ens. Leanna Macapagal, NMRTC Portsmouth
Ens. Grace O'Connor, NMRTC Portsmouth

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BRAVO ZULU TO OUR RECENT GRADUATES!

Cmdr. Liza Stone, 2nd Med Bn, Doctor of Nursing Practice, Education Leadership

Lt. Cmdr. Dehart, NMRTC Portsmouth, Doctor of Nursing Practice

Lt. Cmdr. Sara Erskine, NR NMRTC San Diego/USNS Mercy, Doctor of Philosophy, Psychology

Lt. Cmdr. Paul Gonzales, NMRTC Lemoore, Master of Business Administration

Lt. Cmdr. Jennifer Lo, NMRTC Portsmouth/ERCS 16-20, Master of Arts

Lt. Cmdr. Rachel Ortiz, NMRTC Lemoore, Master of Science in Nursing Informatics

Lt. Janet Cristo, NMRTC Portsmouth, Master of Science in Nursing, Clinical Leadership

Lt. Melissa Huggins, NR NMRTC Portsmouth/USNS Comfort, Master of Science in Nursing, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist

Lt. Dylan James, NMRTC Camp Pendleton, Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) Phase 1

Lt. Shatara Jewell, NMRTC Camp Lejeune, Master of Science in Nursing, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Lt. Justin King, 1st Med Bn, Master of Public Health Administration

Lt. Aaron Lueke, Exped Med Fac Alpha, Master of Science in Nursing, Healthcare Leadership

Lt. Carla Nicholas, NMRTC Okinawa, Master of Science in Nursing, Family Nurse Practitioner

Lt. Tanner Pavelka, 1st Med Bn, Master Science in Nursing, selected for redesignation as Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Lt. Lori Quinn, NMRTC Portsmouth, Master of Science, Nursing Education

Lt. Christine Villanueva, 1st Med Bn, Master of Science in Forensic Nursing

Lt. Ruth Williams, NMRTU MCRD Parris Island, Master of Science in Nursing, Nursing Administration

Lt. Laron Worsley, NMRTC Portsmouth, Master of Science in Nursing, Family Nurse Practitioner

Lt. J.G. Radjan Arellano, NMRTC Camp Pendleton, Master of Science in Nursing

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BRAVO ZULU FOR YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS!

FROM NRMTC CAMP LEJEUNE:

Capt. Melissa Troncoso, Cmdr. Emily Latimer, and Lt. Cmdr. Aaron Georgas published "A Multi-Pronged Approach to Shipyard Heat Stress Injury Prevention" in the journal Workplace Health & Safety

Cmdr. Samantha Jennings and Lt. Cmdr. Marie F. Chiong will present their research, "A Scoping Review of Medical Conditions and Triage Patterns in Austere Maritime Environment to Optimize Prolonged Patient Care" at the TSNRP 2026 Research Symposium.

Cmdr. Emily Latimer, Cmdr. Sarah Bush, Lt. Cmdr. Joanna Timmer, MC, Lt. Alison Fleer, and Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Hope Newton received a TSNRP Mini-EBP Grant and completed project "Improving Pediatric Blood Administration Safety During Trauma Resuscitation: An EBP Project" that brought new pediatric rapid transfusion capabilities to a Level 3 Trauma Center.

Lt. Cmdr. Sheila Ann O'Connor, Cmdr. Eric Foster, Lt. Timothy W. Altizer, and Cmdr. Eric T. Tobin published "Expanding Beneficiary Access to Mental Health Support Utilizing a Digital Health Application: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder Coach" in Nursing Clinics of North America.

FROM NMRTC PORTSMOUTH:

GS RN Nicole Davis earned her MSN.

GS RN Leah Potter recertified in Infant Massage.

NICU awarded a $10,000 grant from the Tri-Service Nursing Research Program (TSNRP).

FROM NMRTC YOKOSUKA:

Lt. J.G. Sarah Martin in May to October 2025, completed a collaborative project with NMRTC Cherry Point and NMRTC San Diego, "Empowering Nurses to Uphold & Enhance Their Clinical Knowledge, Skills, & Abilities Through Low- Fidelity Simulation," sponsored by the Tri-Service Nursing Research Program and submitted for consideration to be presented at the TSNRP conference Spring 2026.

2025 MHS WINNERS:

Senior Leadership Category (O5-O6)
Capt. Patricia Butler

Midgrade Leadership Category (O3-O4)
Lt. Cmdr. Larry A. Gunter II

Junior Leadership Category (O1-O2)
Lt. J.G. Drew Murray

FROM NMRTC CAMP PENDLETON:

Lt. Candice Carter completed Tropical Medicine

FROM 1ST MEDICAL BATTALION:

8 nurses earned the **Fleet Marine Force (FMF)** warfare device

Completed Joint En Route Care Course (JECC)
Lt. Cmdr. Joshua Chatman, 1st Med Bn
Lt. Cmdr. Clay Cooper, 1st Med Bn
Lt. Brenda Carey, 1st Med Bn
Lt. Scott Crane, 1st Med Bn
Lt. Samantha Derry, 1st Med Bn
Lt. Cristina Hellar, 1st Med Bn
Lt. Pilar Longoria, 1st Med Bn
Lt. Regine Sibayan, 1st Med Bn
Lt. Pepetinovao Sitafine, 1st Med Bn

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PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP 2025 RECAP

BRAVO ZULU NMRTC PEARL HARBOR & NMRTC SAN DIEGO for your contributions during Pacific Partnership 2025!

Lt. J.G. Richter and team placing an IV in critically dehydrated 5-week-old in Chuuk/Released

Lt. Viana Valdez and Lt. J.G. Gerald Chavez, NMRTC San Diego working with a public health nurse to check patients' vital signs at a community outreach event in Peleliu, Palau/Released

Lt. Richter teaching nurses in Samoa Stop the Bleed and Basic Life Support Skills/Released

Lt. Cmdr. Pingotti, NMRTC Pearl Harbor (photo on left) teaching STI signs, symptoms and treatment, as well as implementing EBP clinical STI protocols to aspiring nurses, and (photo on right) partnering with Vanuatu Public Health to educate school-aged children about cervical cancer and HPV /Released

Submitted by Cmdr. LaDonyia Graham

Cmdr. Jericho Ramirez and Lt.Cmdr. Howell, NMRTC San Diego at a community health engagement working together to equip the Queen of Palau with skills of basic rescucitation/Released

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PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP 2025 RECAP

BRAVO ZULU NMRTC PEARL HARBOR & NMRTC SAN DIEGO for your contributions during Pacific Partnership 2025!

Cmdr. Cheryl Castro, NMRTC San Diego working alongside Samoan health care providers at the Faleolo Medical Center to deliver prenatal checkups/Released

Cmdr. Jericho Ramirez, NMRTC San Diego teaching nurses at the College of Micronesia, Chuuk Basic Emergency Care/Released

Ens. Kelly Kobliska, NMRTC San Diego providing complex wound care to an adult patient at the State Hospital of the Federated States of Micronesia, Chuuk/Released

Lt. Andrea Jacome, NMRTC San Diego educating Vanuatu Public Health nurses about care of the patient with postpartum hemorrhage/Released

Lt. Cmdr. Kevin Ready, NMRTC Camp Pendleton and Lt. Cmdr. Beverly Howell, NMRTC San Diego with U.S. and partner nation forces training local nursing students (photo on the left) and health care providers (photo on the right) at an aeromedical evacuation exercise in Palau/Released

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PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP 2025 RECAP

BRAVO ZULU NURSES OF PP25!

Cmdr. Shirlene Sulatan, Nurse Corps, US Navy Reserves, works alongside Pediatric Nurse Siaosi Fifita to provide pediatric exams at Mu'a Health Clinic in Tonga. CDR Sulatan is a Family Nurse Practitioner from Navy Reserve Unit Camp Pendleton supporting PP25 mission in Tonga/Released

Cmdr. Angelita Kisena (front right), NMRTC Camp Pendleton leading mission team of nurses and corpsmen through a community health engagement with the children of Samoa Victim Support Group at the Campus of Hope, Samoa (October 2025)/Released

Lt. J.G. Brittny Debow, NMRTC San Diego teaching Advance Life Support to ICU nurses of Angau Hospital, Papau New Guinea/Released

MEET YOUR NEW NEWSLETTER TEAM!

Lt. Cmdr. Joy Michelle Dizon
NMRTC Twentynine Palms

I am excited to be part of the newsletter team and support the relaunch of our publication as the Oak Leaf Newsletter. It is a privilege to work alongside a talented team to elevate a platform that connects, informs, and celebrates the Nurse Corps community. Seeing Navy Nurses recognized for their professionalism, innovation, and service across diverse roles and locations is especially motivating, and I am grateful to be part of this effort.

Lt. Cmdr. Beverly Howell
NMRTC San Diego

I am honored to join the team supporting the Oak Leaf Newsletter and helping keep our Nurse Corps family connected! I'm looking forward to contributing to a publication that celebrates our profession, highlights the incredible capabilities of Navy Nurses, and strengthens the sense of community we share - one story at a time.

Lt. Adeline Villanueva
NMRTC Bethesda

I'm grateful for the opportunity to be part of the team and contribute to the strong foundation already in place. I am especially excited to help relaunch the Oak Leaf Newsletter and showcase the remarkable efforts, achievements, and dedication of our Navy Nurses around the world. It is an honor to help share your stories and celebrate the meaningful work you do every day!

Lt. Cmdr. Diana Hemstreet
Navy Nurse Corps Reserve

It's an honor to serve as an editor for the Oak Leaf Newsletter. I'm grateful for the chance to highlight the dedication and achievements of our Navy Nurse Corps Officers. I'm proud to be part of a team that shines a light on the important work often done behind the scenes. Contributing to a publication that connects and uplifts nurses across the Fleet and Reserve means a great deal to me.

Lt. Brook Barges
Navy Nurse Corps Reserve

I am excited to be part of the team and look forward to seeing the new editions of the Oak Leaf Newsletter. I am looking forward to highlighting the hard work the Nurse Corps contributes on the daily. Feeling privileged to be selected to bring forth your stories.

THE NEWSLETTER TEAM WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Earned your certification?
Earned your advanced degree?
Completed advanced training?
Published an article?
Presented your research?
Implemented a new program?
Implemented process improvement?
Have a story/photo you'd like to share?

All articles should be submitted as 1/2 page of Times New Roman, size 12 font, single-spaced with an official photo from the author.
To: NurseCorpsNewsletter@gmail.com

WE LOVE PHOTOS!

Please submit your photos of our Nurse Corps in action and comply with PAO Guidelines:

- Subject of photo
- Photographer
- Date/location of photo
- Statement that the photo was released by your Command PAO
- No badges or other protected information

CONTACTS

Rear. Adm. Robert Hawkins
Navy Nurse Corps Chief

The Navy Nurse Corps is an essential component of Navy Medicine, providing comprehensive, patient-centered care in support of the Navy and Marine Corps team. Established in 1908, the Corps is composed of highly trained officers who deliver clinical excellence, operational readiness, and leadership across a wide range of medical environments. Navy Nurses serve in military treatment facilities, with operational units, aboard ships, with the Fleet Marine Force, and in humanitarian and global health engagements around the world. Their expertise spans diverse specialties—including medical-surgical nursing, emergency/trauma, critical care, perioperative nursing, pediatrics, mental health, anesthesia, and education—ensuring the health and readiness of our warfighters and their families.

CORPS CHIEF OFFICE STAFF

Reserve Deputy Chief
Rear. Adm. Kimberly Sandberg, NC, USN

Deputy Chief
Capt. Tracey Giles, NC, USN

Career Planner
Capt. Teresa Dent, NC, USN

Policy & Practice
Capt. Colleen Blosser, NC, USN

Reserve Affairs Officer
Capt. Amy Loesche, NC, USN